

Message Text

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TO USMISSION USNATO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 229085

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: 'ATO, EEC

SUBJECT: EC-NINE ANALYSIS: THE SITUATION IN HUNGARY

REFS: (A) NATO 6871 (B) NATO A-192

1. FOLLOWING ARE DEPARTMENT COMMENTS ON EC-9 PAPER "THE

SITUATION OF HUNGARY', KEYED TO TITLED MAIN SECTIONS AND
NUMBERED SUBSECTIONS. WE FIND THIS AN EXCELLENT, BALANCED
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2. NEM AND THE ECONOMY:

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THAT NYERS LOST HIS IMPORTANT POSITIONS ON THE POLITBURO
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THAT SINCE LAST FALL HE HAS MADE SOME SORT OF A COMEBACK,
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ORIGINALLY ENVISIONED, INTER ALIA, BY NYERS HIMSELF.

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3. BACKGROUND TO HUNGARY'S FOREIGN POLICY:

IN SUBSECTION 2, THE NUMBER OF SOVIET TROOPS STATIONED IN HUNGARY IS ABOUT 60,000 MEN (1978).

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5. HUNGARY AND THE WEST:

A. CONCERNING KADAR'S VISIT TO AUSTRIA, (SUBSECTION 2), WE THINK IT IS IN ERROR TO CHARACTERIZE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AS "PERHAPS THE MOST STRAINED SINCE 1956." RATHER THE VISIT WAS WIDELY AND CORRECTLY SEEN AS A BENCHMARK OF THE PROGRESS MADE IN REESTABLISHING THE TRADITIONAL AND HISTORICAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEIR RELATIONS WERE INDEED SEVERELY STRAINED IN THE IMMEDIATE POST-1956 PERIOD. IN ADDITION, THE VISIT WAS ALSO SIGNIFICANT, IN RETROSPECT, BECAUSE IT WAS THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF OFFICIAL VISITS TO WEST EUROPEAN
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WARSAW PACT MEMBER AND A WESTERN COUNTRY SHARING A COMMON BORDER.

B. THE WORK "REFUGEES" (SUBSECTION 3) MIGHT BE CHANGED TO "RETREATING HUNGARIAN ARMY UNITS"; THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE SHOULD BEGIN "FOR DECADES, IT WAS ONE OF THE MAJOR BONES..."

6. GENERAL COMMENTS:

BY WAY OF MORE GENERAL COMMENTS, THE FOLLOWING AREAS NOT TOUCHED IN THE PAPER MIGHT, IN OUR VIEW, HAVE MERITED APPROPRIATE TREATMENT:

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--THE SECTION UNDER "DISSIDENTS" WOULD HAVE BENEFITED FROM A FULLER ASSESSMENT OF THE REASONS BEHIND THE ABSENCE OF ACTIVE DISSIDENCE, E.G., THE LACK OF FORMAL CENSORSHIP, THE RELATIVE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL (INCLUDING TO THE WEST), THE RISING "TIDE" OF NATIONAL AWARENESS, AND, AS ONE OF THE MORE INTERESTING MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS AWARENESS, THE GOVERNMENT'S CULTIVATION OF ETHNIC
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HUNGARIANS IN THE WEST AND IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. THE LATTER DEVELOPMENT, OF COURSE, HAS POTENTIALLY SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR HUNGARO-ROMANIAN RELATIONS THAT ARE OF CONCERN TO KADAR. OF COURSE, THE KADAR REGIME DOES FIGHT AGAINST "BOURGEOIS NATIONALISM," AS WAS POINTED OUT CORRECTLY, BUT THIS IS ONLY PART OF THE STORY; A MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT AND NOVEL DEVELOPMENT IS THE EXTENT TO WHICH TRADITIONAL NATIONAL SENTIMENTS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO BREAK THROUG; THE VENEER OF IDEOLOGICAL DOGMA IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE IN THE RECENT PAST. TO BE SURE, THIS PHENOMENON IS BEING CLOSELY WATCHED AND EVEN SHAPED BY THE REGIME IF ONLY TO ENSURE THAT IT DOES NOT GET OUT OF HAND; MOREOVER, IF KEPT WITHIN ACCEPTABLE LIMITS -- AS IT HAS BEEN THUS FAR -- KADAR STANDS TO REAP CONSIDERABLE BENEFIT FROM IT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 229085

FOR USEEC

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 229085 ACTION USNATO INFO BUDAPEST
DATED SEPT 9, 1978.

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